



the Grebe

Mission of The Friends
of Deer Flat:

The purpose of this group is to promote, protect, and provide resources to preserve and enhance Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge for the enjoyment of present and future generations.

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Volume 3, Issue 3

Summer 2008

Spring Morning at the Refuge

By Bob Christensen

The hazy sun rose lazily in the east and cast its brightness across the lake and uplands. The cottonwoods and brushy thickets along the edge of the lake drank in the solar warmth and sent its energy to the new green buds emerging from the ends of the branches. A warming breeze sent rippling waves washing one after another against the shoreline. It rebounded off the surface of the lake and tenderly rocked the riparian trees tops and awakened the grasses on the hillsides.

Meadowlarks sang their melodious song from the tips of the sagebrush while robins searched for their morning repast among the grasses and below the bushes. The coarse cries of magpies echoed throughout the shoreline thickets, and quail called from their secret retreats. A chorus of red-winged blackbirds out-voiced all other sounds, as they set up their breeding territories in a small clump of weathered cattails on the nearside of the lake. An old badger paused for a moment, sniffed the morning air and returned to his digging. There was a strong scent of gophers coming from the narrow burrows intersecting his hillside excavation.

At "The Narrows" near the center of the lake, the white head of a mother eagle shown brightly in the rays of the early sunshine. She was perched on the fore-edge of a large stick nest, high



in a swaying cottonwood tree. A young eaglet, shaded by its mother's body, flexed its downy gray wings--out and in, down and up. Occasionally he poked his head around his mother's breast to get a peek at the world beyond the aerie. Meanwhile, the father eagle sat in vigil on his perch one-quarter mile north of the nest, watching for any intruders that might dare enter his breeding territory.

At Murphy's Neck--a small bay close to the west end of the lake--a red-tailed hawk stood on the edge of its nest in a tall tree. It poked its head repeatedly into the bowl of the nest, offering bits of prey meat to its offspring.

(continued on page 2)

President's Corner

WHAT WILL BE THE FUTURE OF THE FRIENDS OF DEER FLAT?

The Friends of Deer Flat Wildlife Refuge have reached a crisis point. Although our membership has grown to over 80 interested, concerned folks, only a handful have taken on the tasks of leadership, i.e., Board members, committee chairs and members, and volunteers to help with projects.

At the end of this year, we will no longer have an editor for "The Grebe" newsletter; the web master's work schedule has changed and she is no longer able to give the web site the time she once had; we have no one interested in being vice president, therefore we will be in the position again next year of not having anyone prepared to take the position of president. The handful of members who have taken on the above mentioned leadership roles are beginning to feel the pressure and are burning out.

We are in our third year as a Friends group and have contributed so much to the Refuge in terms of financial assistance, advocacy, and special projects and events. I am posing these questions to you --

Since we're having trouble getting members actively involved, how do you envision the future of the Friends group? What is the best use of our funds, focus, time, and energy? Should we try to continue as we have for these three years, or are there other, less time consuming yet meaningful ways to pursue our mission?

We'll be discussing this issue following the presentations at the General Meeting on June 3. If you are unable to attend the meeting, please send your ideas to me at water-fall@speedyquick.net or call me at 459-4740.

Thank you for your ideas.

Lyndell Jackson, President



Photo by Mike Shipman



Midsummer Joys

by Winifred Sackville Stoner, Jr.

Give me the joys of summer,
Of SUMMER QUEEN so fair,
With wealth of lovely flowers
And fruits and sun-kissed air!

No, I will take the joys
Of SUMMER every time,
So to this Queen of Seasons
I dedicate my rhyme.

Talk not to me of winter
With ice and frost and snow,
Nor changing spring and autumn
When howling winds will blow.

Wishing you all a truly wonderful summer! Enjoy!!
Lyndell Jackson, President

Spring Morning (continued)

Occasionally, a downy white head would protrude above the level of the nest to be first in position to receive the next offered bit of nourishment

Near the Upper Dam, a pair of ospreys was still brooding a nest of eggs. The nest sat on top of a tall pole that was embedded in the shallows of the lake. The female sat tight on a stick nest that was interlaced with baling twine and other imaginative decorations. The male, perched on a nearby pole, tore flesh from a freshly caught bass. When finished he dropped the fish and flew a hundred yards off to perch and loaf on the dead branch of a lakeside cottonwood. After a short time, the female osprey casually left her nest and flew nonchalantly up to her mate. She gently nudged him off his tree perch, and herded him back in a slow, but deliberate flight until he lit on the nest and took his brooding position on the set of eggs. She then scooped up the fish carcass and began her morning meal.

Below the cottonwood, in the secret tunnels and cover of the underbrush, a pair of cottontails chased each other back and forth, dodging through and around the woody obstacles in their path. They seemed oblivious of the osprey which had been perched above them or any other interloper that might be watching their mating ritual. Occasionally they paused, and with twitching noses, watched each other, then were off again on the merry chase.

Across the lake, along the southern shoreline, several large rafts of white pelicans rode the gentle waves. Occasionally, small flocks broke away to fly with black-tipped wings to other areas of the lake in search of better fishing waters. Flocks of gulls followed in their wake or flew beyond the boundary of the refuge to feed behind the discs and ploughs of the farmers working the soils of adjacent farmlands.

Great blue herons winged there way back and forth across the lake. They foraged for food in the shallows, and then returned to feed the squawking young herons that were impatiently waiting in the nest-laden trees of the South Side heron rookery.

Spring has come to Lake Lowell, and the Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge, bringing the warming sun, temperate breezes, greening vegetation, and a wealth of new life.

Mark your calendar...

Upcoming Events

General Member Meeting

Tuesday, June 3, 7:00 p.m. - **Find out what is behind the strange happenings with the dam**

Lecture Series

Tuesday, June 10th, 7 p.m. – Living with Wildlife

Executive Board Meeting

Wednesday, June 11th, 2:00 p.m.

Photography Workshop

Saturday, June 14th, 8:00 a.m. (contact Lee McGlinsky at 465-0404 for more information)

Weed Warriors

Saturday, June 21st, 9:00 to Noon at the Visitor Center

Backyard Wildlife Habitat

Saturday, June 24th, - at Bob and Dixie Blome's home
- Potluck and presentations about attracting wildlife to your backyard, call Dixie Blome at 466-2148 for information.

Lecture Series

Tuesday, July 8th, 7 p.m. - **Ethnobotany**

Executive Board Meeting

Wednesday, July 9th, 2:00 p.m.

Weed Warriors

Saturday, July 19th, 9:00 to Noon at the Visitor Center

General Member Meeting

Tuesday, August 5th, 7:00 p.m. -
Recreational opportunities at the refuge

Lecture Series

Tuesday, August 8th, 7:00 p.m. - **TBA, call the refuge for information**

Weed Warriors

Saturday, August 16th, 9:00 to Noon at the Visitor Center

BioBlitz

Friday and Saturday, August 15th and 16th. See pages 6 and 7 for more information.

June 3rd Program -

At their June 3rd General Meeting, we will have the opportunity to learn firsthand about the strange goings on at the Upper Dam at Lake Lowell. For many months now and over the winter, various construction activities at the dam have stimulated the curiosity of not only refuge staff, but also of volunteers, visitors, local neighbors, and refuge wildlife. Mr. Larry Wolf of the Bureau of Reclamation's Pacific Northwest Region's Safety of Dams office will meet with us and teach us about the Dam Safety program for Lake Lowell and how it ties in with the continued operation and maintenance of the Upper and Lower Dams. Interested individuals can read more about the Safety of Dams Project by going to:

<http://www.usbr.gov/pn/programs/ea/idaho/deerflat/draftea.pdf>

The Grebe is published quarterly for the members of the Friends of Deer Flat Wildlife Refuge. If you have photos, stories, or other information for the Grebe, please email it to: idahobirder@hotmail.com or call 850-5885

Friends as Volunteers

Membership News

by Lee McGlinsky

*...I'd like to
welcome new
members...*

A warm welcome to these new Friends members :

Stan Weeks

Laura Jo Weeks

Mark weeks

Steven Weeks

Deloris & David Cram (who also made a generous donation to Friends)

The Membership Committee held a special event for neighbors living near refuge borders. Twenty-four adults and numerous children came for homemade desserts and to hear Elaine Johnson, Refuge Manager, speak about the functions of a refuge. Susan Kain, Educational Outreach Director, also talked about the various programs offered for families. Bob Christensen gave a presentation he made about the Friends. While the adults listened to the program the children did activities in the lobby supervised by our wonderful Kid Wranglers, Julie Parsons, her daughter, Courtney and her friend, Brandon.

We don't know yet whether this event gained us any new members but it certainly gained good will and support for the Refuge. A special thanks goes to the Friends who delivered the invitations; Dixie & Bob Blome, Kathy & Jim Iverson, Lynn Wilfling, Jim Holcomb, Jean Haber, and Lee & Al McGlinsky. Also, thanks to the members who made the great desserts.



Did you know....?

61 National Wildlife Refuges were established to protect endangered species, ranging in size from the 116,585-acre Buenos Aires NWR in Arizona established to protect the masked bobwhite quail to the 7-acre Watercress Darter NWR in Alabama established to protect the watercress darter.

To read more, visit <http://www.fws.gov/endangered/>.

Guam NWR is the only national wildlife refuge on the other side of the international dateline. It's already tomorrow there! The refuge provides habitat for the last remaining populations of the endangered Mariana fruit bat, Mariana crow, and the *Serianthes nelsonii* tree. The non-native brown tree snake is considered the primary cause for the decline of native Guam bird species on this island with no indigenous snake species.

June 14th Wildlife Photography Workshop: Mike Shipman

*...On June
14th you
can escape
the realm
of urban
sprawl ...*

The eyes of the nature photographer require a certain disdain from the ordinary world of fast cars and materialism. On June 14th you can escape the realm of urban sprawl and come dwell amongst the abundance of wildlife habitat and scenery that surround Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge.

Mike Shipman, a self-taught photographer and innovator of Blue Planet Photography will hold his first Photo workshop at the refuge. The workshop is being put on by the Friends of DFWR and will commence at 8am on the morning of the 14th. A brief orientation will start off the day and then its into the field for an easy hike and morning photography session. The workshop will cover photography composition, camera operation, seeing and using natural light, flash photography, and the opportunity to hone your photographic vision.

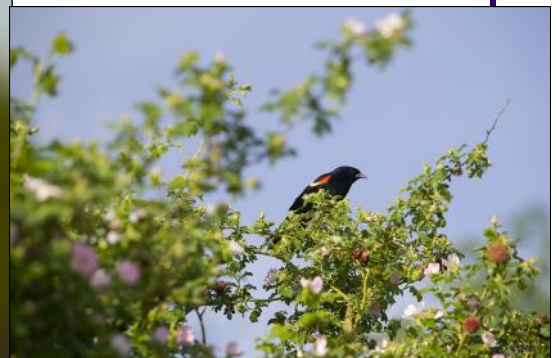
Mike sees it as important to bring these workshops to the refuge on several levels. "The refuge offers many opportunities for photographers, from wildlife and landscape photography, to wildflowers and macro." The programs within the refuge stress the importance of open space, an ideal that has been integral for Mike throughout his journey as a professional photographer and park ranger in Colorado.

"With all the development beginning to surround the refuge, its even more important that the public understand what that means to that resource." This workshop will allow participants to learn more about their cameras and the art of photography while being immersed in a pristine wildlife environment.

The workshop will begin at 8am and last until noon, at which time a lunch and classroom session will follow concentrating on the days photos. The fee for the workshop is \$95. Meet at the Deer Flat Wildlife Visitors Center 13751 Upper Embankment Rd. at the intersection of Roosevelt and Indiana. There are spaces for 10 allotted participants so hurry and sign up for the workshop now. Info, call 208-466-2148

by Travis Vance-student intern friends
of DFWR

Photos by Mike Shipman



Help Us to Preserve America

The Friends of Deer Flat Wildlife Refuge was recently awarded a Preserve America grant by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to research the history of Lake Lowell and Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge and to install a historical interpretive trail across the Upper Dam at the lake.

To capture some of the lake's rich history, research will include interviews with long-time or past residents who have personal accounts of activities that occurred at Lake Lowell. This project has particular urgency, as many of the people with first-hand accounts are in their later stages of life. It is also particularly timely, as the lake and refuge will be celebrating their centennial in 2009.

Do you know someone who has irrigated with Lake Lowell water for many years? Worked on a CCC or WPA crew at Lake Lowell in the 1930s? Been a long-term refuge neighbor or employee? Had a long-term history of fishing, hunting, or wildlife-watching at the lake?

Or, are you interested in helping conduct oral history interviews during summer and early fall 2008? Interviewing experience is not required. Training will be provided by the Idaho State Historical Society's oral historian in June.

To suggest potential interviewees, or to help with the project, please contact Lauren Giebler (208-467-9278).

Wildlife Refuge Volunteer Friends from 37 States Call on Congress To Increase Refuge System Funding

Nearly 150 "Friends Group" volunteers supporting more than 108 national wildlife refuges in 37 states across the country met in early April with their legislators on Capitol Hill to promote an annual budget of \$514 million, or roughly \$5.14 per acre for the nearly 100,000 million acre Refuge System in fiscal year 2009. These refuge advocates met with decision-makers from their home states and with Congressional committee members and staff, seeking to expand Congressional support and draw attention to the Refuge System's crippling \$3.6-billion funding backlog. The Capitol Hill rally, organized by the National Wildlife Refuge Association, was preceded by advocacy training emphasizing the important role concerned citizens have in educating elected officials about the importance of conserving wildlife and habitats, and the value that it extends to local communities.

Twenty Friends, representing refuges in all 8 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service regions, met with staff from the House and Senate Appropriations Subcommittees on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies. A group of 16 Friends from refuges across the country attended a special meeting with Congressman Norm Dicks, Chairman of the House Subcommittee. As indicated in the March edition of the Flyer, Friends were not allocated time to appear before the subcommittee on Public Witness Day due to time constraints. Consequently NWRA worked to arrange this meeting with Chairman Dicks to ensure that Friends had the opportunity to speak directly with the Chairman and express their concerns regarding their refuges and the refuge system.

Cathy Eells and Noreen Tripp represented the Friends of Deer Flat Wildlife Refuge at the conference. See page 11 for their story.

You're invited to participate in the 3rd Annual Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge BioBlitz!



The 2007 Bioblitz was a success thanks to the 35 scientists who surveyed every class of life at the refuge and led discussions and demonstrations about their specialties, as well as the 50 volunteers at booths and activity stations. Over 275 species were identified and 420 community members learned about wildlife biology during the BioBlitz. This is your chance to get involved!

What is a BioBlitz?

A 24-hr rapid inventory of biological diversity. BioBlitzes are held nationwide and this is the only one in Idaho!

The species inventories collected each year are important for future management decisions of the refuge and would otherwise not be documented due to the refuge's limited staff.

Why is Deer Flat hosting a BioBlitz?

To document biodiversity at Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge.

To build partnerships between local scientists, naturalists, and the refuge.

To teach the public about the benefits of biodiversity and involve the community in scientific research.

Where and when will the BioBlitz be held?

The BioBlitz will be at Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge on August 15th and 16th. Surveyors set their own hours. The festival will be on Saturday from 10a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

We Need You!

The success of this BioBlitz depends on scientists and volunteers.

Do you have experience doing field work? Can you identify species within a particular taxon? Then we need your help!

If you are interested in participating or have any questions contact Amy Ulappa at 467-9278 or e-mail amy_ulappa@fws.gov.



Photo by Mike Shipman

Know of others that might be interested and have the expertise we need? Please pass this message to them.

Thanks for replying and I look forward to bioblitzing with you!

Amy Ulappa,

BioBlitz Coordinator

13751 Upper Embankment Road, Nampa, Idaho 83686

BioBlitz 2008

Volunteer Sign-up for August 16, 2008

Name:

Phone Number:

Address:

E-mail:



Photo by Mike Shipman

*Please check three jobs you are interested in
volunteering for at BioBlitz:*

- ☐ **Bug Tent attendant** – includes leading groups of children to net insects
- ☐ **Kid Craft Room attendant** – oversees the craft projects, stocks supplies
- ☐ **Photographer** – documents surveyors and the festival
- ☐ **Field assistant** – helps scientists in the field doing surveys
- ☐ **Parking attendant** – directs traffic and shuttles visitors to the boat tours
- ☐ **Festival set-up and clean up crew** – also includes odd jobs at the event

Detach and return the top ASAP, keep the bottom for your records

Thank you!

*After returning this form you are signed up to volunteer at **BioBlitz 2008 on August 16** and
will receive a confirmation packet in the mail in July.*

Details for volunteering at BioBlitz 2008:

- The BioBlitz festival is from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm, August 16, 2008 (set-up is at 8:30 and clean-up will end at 4:00)
- Be on the look out for e-mails as the volunteer schedules are put together.
- You will be get your schedule for the day and a time to arrive for orientation in the confirmation packet sent in July
Volunteers will receive an event t-shirt, lunch and beverages

BioBlitz Coordinator—Contact: Amy Ulappa
Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge
13751 Upper Embankment Road
Nampa, ID 83686

Phone: (208) 467-9278
Fax: (208) 467-1019
email: amy_ulappa@fws.gov

Scout Day at Deer Flat continues to need a few more volunteers

The Scout Days program continues to be a huge success. So far nearly 350 children and adults have participated in this event and there has been positive feedback from the public, plus all of our volunteers have enjoyed interacting with the scouts and their families.

Each month we need four volunteers to run the event. One volunteer will staff the welcome table from 12:30-1:30 and the other three volunteers will be station leaders and should plan to be at the refuge from 12:15-3:00. *Volunteers are still needed to help staff the event in June, July and August!*

Station leaders facilitate activities and a nature hike for one of three groups of scouts; Webelo Cub Scouts, Bear Cub Scouts and Junior Girl Scouts, or Wolf Cub Scouts and Brownie Girl Scouts. Lesson plans and supplies are ready for you and they meet the badge requirements for the scouts at your station. Please take the time to share your knowledge of plants and animals with the young people who live in our area.

If you would like to volunteer, contact Amy Ulappa at 467-9278



Judith and Amy discuss the Scout Days session

HOW TO HELP STAMP OUT HABITAT LOSS

From Wildlife Refuge Magazine

Established by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1934 as a federal waterfowl-hunting license whose proceeds went to wetlands acquisition for refuges, the 'duck stamp' has evolved over time. Today, the stamp, officially called the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp raises approximately \$25 million annually. 98¢ of every dollar invested in the stamp permanently conserves wildlife habitat for future generations - a small investment will bring you and your family long-term returns.

The \$15 stamp not only serves as a federal waterfowl hunting license but also as a free pass to refuges that charge entry fees. Many non-hunters buy the stamp to support the Refuge System land acquisitions, for a refuge entry pass and as a collector's item.



Over the years, stamp sales have generated more than \$700 million, which has been used to help purchase or lease more than 5.2 million acres of wetland and grassland refuge habitat.

The stamps are sold in many post offices, at Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge and other federal wildlife refuges and many sporting goods stores.

“Friends for the Future” Conference

by Cathy Eells

Noreen Tripp and I attended the “Friends for the Future” Conference in Shepherdstown, West Virginia in early April. The conference was held at the National Conservation Training Center, a training facility for U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service employees. 90 different Friends groups from across the U. S. and Hawaii were represented. The conference was sponsored by the Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Wildlife Refuge Association.

The mission of the sponsors was to provide a forum to energize Friends and build lasting relationships. The guest speakers were dynamic and inspirational. They emphasized the importance of our refuge system, the need to educate through outreach into our communities, and the huge contribution that volunteers make system wide.

Because Fish and Wildlife Service staff are federal employees, they are restricted in their ability to communicate refuge needs to decision makers. This is where the Friends members play a vital role because WE CAN talk with our legislators!



We ascended Capitol Hill to visit our lawmakers and staffers, asking them to support increased funding to the National Wildlife Refuge System for Fiscal Year 2009 in the amount of \$514 million. Noreen and I met with staffers from Representative Mike Simpson's, Senator Larry Craig's, and Senator Mike Crapo's offices and we asked for their help. In 1977, Canyon County had a population of 77,000, our refuge had a staff of seven people. In 2007 the population of Canyon County had nearly tripled to 200,000 and due to budgetary cutbacks, the staff has been reduced to four people. An increase in population brings more visitors to the refuge, but it also causes an increase in trash, law enforcement issues, not to mention the difficulty of fighting the number one issue system wide, invasive

species. The refuge has 110,000 visitors a year and 6,000 school students visit annually. The 6,000 school student visits are handled by one Visitors Services Mgr. and one volunteer.

There are 40,000 volunteers contributing 14 million hours in our National Wildlife Refuge System, I believe that we as a Friends group should have several priorities:

- Educational outreach to the public with an emphasis on parents and children. It is imperative that we engage the next generation in outdoor experiences.
- Fund raising: after talking with other Friends members, it became clear that one of the best ways to raise funds is by operating a bookstore.
- Volunteer, volunteer, volunteer! Those are awesome statistics, what better way is there to truly make a difference?
- Membership recruitment and involvement. We are not alone in our challenge to increase membership and involvement of members.

Be a Friend! Join Today!

Name

Address

City

State

Zip Code

Telephone

Email

Annual Membership Categories

Senior (62+) \$10

Individual \$15

Family \$25

Student \$10

All contributions are tax deductible

*Please print this page and return with a check
payable to:*

*Friends of Deer Flat Wildlife Refuge
13751 Upper Embankment Road
Nampa, Idaho 83686-8046*

Lyndell Jackson - 208-459-4740





**FRIENDS OF DEER
FLAT WILDLIFE
REFUGE**

13751 Upper Embankment
Road
Nampa, Idaho 83686-8046

Executive Board:

**President - Lyndell
Jackson (459-4740)**
**Vice President -
Treasurer - Bob
Christensen (454-2518)**
**Secretary - Lynette
Wilfling (468-0506) & Lee
McGlinsky (465-0404)**

**Membership - Lee
Mc Glinsky (465-0404)**
**Projects - Noreen Tripp
(468-0402)**
**Newsletter - Denise Hughes
(850-5885)**

**We are on the web at
www.deerflatfriends.org**

To preserves and enhance Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge

The Grebe is published four times a year — look for the next issue in September 2008

Lecture Series Programs (7 to 8 p.m.)



**Tuesday, June 10th
Living with Wildlife**

Living in Idaho means living close to the wildlife we love. Learn how to better co-exist with our wild life neighbors in a way that is safe for wildlife.

*Dan Papp, Idaho Dept. of
Fish and Game*



**Tuesday, July 8th
Ethnobotany**

Ethnobotany. What's that? This presentation will focus on how human and plant interactions throughout history have shaped humanity and how we can protect the diversity of the plants on earth.



Tuesday, August 8th

TBA

Check with the Refuge for the August lecture series topic! Call 467-9278 or check the refuge website at www.fws.gov/deerflat